Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 06217 01 OF 03 061712Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 061609Z JUL 77
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USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 ATHENS 6217

EXDIS - DEPARTMENT PASS AS INFO TO USCINCEUR AND USNMR SHAPE
MILITARY ADDRESSEES PLEASE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

BRUSSELS FOR USEC

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PINT, GR, US
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL MEETING WITH CARAMANLIS

1. SUMMARY. CARAMANLIS IS SATISFIED WITH THE COURSE OF U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS; IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS: WOULD WELCOME A TURKISH MILITARY-BACKED "GRAND ALLIANCE" OF ECEVIT AND DEMIREL; CONSIDERS THE CYPRUS PROBLEM VIRTUALLY SETTLED FOR THE PRESENT, EXCEPT FORMALLY AND IN DETAIL; IS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT DECLINE AND WEAKNESS IN WESTERN EUROPE; SEES CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 06217 01 OF 03 061712Z

SOME CHANGES AHEAD IN THE USSR; THINKS THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE BALKANS IS SATISFACTORY; BELIEVES MUCH MUST STILL BE DONE FOR DEMOCRACY TO BE SAFELY AND LASTINGLY ROOTED IN GREECE; GIVES HIS WORD TO FINISH THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS SOON; PROMISES TO CONTINUE UNABATED THE SEARCH FOR WELCH'S KILLERS; AND ACTS LIKE HE WILL BE AROUND AND IN CHARGE IN GREECE FOR A LONG TIME. END SUMMARY.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

2. AT THE OUTSET OF MY FAREWELL MEETING JULY 5 WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME DISCUSSING PERSONAL MATTERS AND RECALLING THE MANY MEETINGS--SOME OF THEM AT CRITICAL POINTS-- WE HAD HAD DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS. HE EXPRESSED ONCE AGAIN HIS DEEP REGRET AT MY DEPARTURE AND SAID A NUMBER OF COMPLIMENTARY THINGS, WHICH NEED NOT BE RECORDED HERE, ABOUT MY WORK IN GREECE. HE SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO NOTE THE FINE THINGS BEING SAID ABOUT MY FAMILY AND ME IN THE GREEK PRESS AND PUBLICLY NOW, WHICH WAS A FAR CRY FROM THE SITUATION SEVERAL YEARS AGO. I TOOK THE OCCASION TO EXPRESS MY ADMIRATION FOR THE LEADERSHIP HE HAS PROVIDED THIS NATION AND THE NEAR MIRACLE HE HAD ACCOMPLISHED IN BRINGING GREECE TO ITS PRESENT POSITION FROM THE DISASTROUS SITUATION OF THREE YEARS AGO. I ALSO GAVE HIM STRONG PERSONAL ASSURANCES ABOUT THE QUALITIES AND ABILITY OF AMBASSADOR SCHAUFELE WHO, I SAID, WOULD BE ARRIVING IN ATHENS IN A FEW WEEKS' TIME. WE THEN MOVED ON TO A NUMBER OF SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS.

3. U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS. CARAMANLIS SAID HE WAS VERY SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS THAT HAD BEEN MADE IN U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE GREEK PEOPLE, HE SAID, WERE ONCE AGAIN PRO-AMERI- CAN AND HE HAD BEEN PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE U.S. HAD RE-FOUND ITS SELF-CONFIDENCE AND WAS PROVIDING AGAIN ITS MUCH NEEDED LEADER- SHIP TO THE WESTERN WORLD. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN VERY IMPRESSED BY PRESIDENT CARTER DURING THEIR MEETING IN LONDON, NOTING THAT THREE THINGS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT STOOD OUT IN HIS MIND: THE PRESIDENT'S OUTER WARMTH AND FRIENDLINESS, HIS CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRES- CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ATHENS 06217 01 OF 03 061712Z

SION, AND HIS OBVIOUS INNER STRENGTH AND RESOLUTION. CARAMANLIS SAID HE HOPED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO TAKE AN INCREASED PERSONAL INTEREST IN GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS FOR, WHILE HE REALIZED THAT NO ONE COUNTRY HAD TOTAL CONTROL OF EVENTS IN THE AREA, THE U.S. HAD AN ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY. HE ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS WARM PERSONAL GREETINGS AND REGARDS TO THE PRESIDENT, WHOM HE HOPED TO SEE AGAIN BEFORE TOO LONG.

4. NEW TURKISH GOVERNMENT AND GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. CARAMANLIS SAID HE SAW NO REASON TO CHANGE HIS ASSESSMENT WHEN WE LAST SPOKE ON THIS SUBJECT A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, THAT THE OUTLOOK FOR A STRONG, CAPABLE AND RESPONSIBLE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN TURKEY REMAINED A DIM ONE. HE INDICATED SOME RELIEF THAT ECEVIT'S MINORITY GOVERNMENT HAD NOT WON A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE ON SUNDAY. (SUBSEQUENTLY, CARAMANLIS' RIGHT-HAND MAN, PETROS MOLYVIATIS, FILLED ME IN FURTHER ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S THINKING ON THIS POINT. HE BELIEVED ECEVIT TO BE A BOLD AND, AT TIMES, RASH MAN. IF ECEVIT HAD WON SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR HIS GOVERN- MENT--WHICH HE DID NOT IN THE ELECTIONS--HE COULD HAVE AFFORDED TO BE PRUDENT AND REASONABLE IN SETTLING THE CYPRUS ISSUE AND GREEK- TURKISH PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, GIVEN HIS LESS THAN MAJORITY SUPPORT, ECEVIT WAS THE KIND OF MAN WHO WOULD PROBABLY HAVE ATTEMPTED SOME

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

DARING MOVES IN THE AEGEAN, AS HE HAD DONE ON CYPRUS, IN AN
EFFORT TO GAIN WIDER POLITICAL BACKING. THIS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY
HAVE LED TO A "CONFRONTATION" WITH GREECE. CARAMANLIS BEGAN TO
WORRY SERIOUSLY ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY, MOLYVIATIS SAID,SHORTLY
AFTER THE TURKISH ELECTION RESULTS WHEN ECEVIT, BEFORE EVEN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 06217 02 OF 03 061738Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 ATHENS 6217

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BEING DESIGNATED PRIME MINISTER AND WITHOUT ANY ADVANCE CONTACT OR
PRIVATE COMMUNICATION WITH CARAMANLIS, HAD PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THAT
HE WOULD MEET WITH CARAMANLIS SOON AFTER HE TOOK OFFICE. SINCE
ECEVIT "DID NOT KNOW" CARAMANLIS' POSITIONS ON RESOLVING OUTSTAND-
ING GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS, THE GOG THOUGHT ECEVIT'S ANNOUNCEMENT
EXCEEDINGLY UNWISE--BECAUSE IF SUCH A SUMMIT MEETING WERE NOT WELL
PREPARED AND ASSURED OF SUCCESS BEFOREHAND IT COULD RESULT IN A
FAILURE WHICH IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD HAVE GREATLY IN-
CREASED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MILITARY SHOWDOWN IN THE AEGEAN.)
CARAMANLIS SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER DEMIREL
WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN FORMING A GOVERNMENT OR NOT BUT IN ANY

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

CASE THE ONLY REAL HOPE HE SAW FOR A STRONG, RESPONSIBLE GOVERN-
MENT IN TURKEY WOULD BE A "GRAND COALITION" BETWEEN DEMIREL AND
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 06217 02 OF 03 061738Z

ECEVIT, IF NEED BE PRESSURED INTO THIS ARRANGEMENT BY THE TURKISH
MILITARY. THEN IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR GREECE AND TURKEY TO REACH
AGREEMENT ON BILATERAL ISSUES, INCLUDING CYPRUS, THAT COULD LAST
FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

5. CYPRUS. THE PRIME MINISTER HAD LITTLE TO SAY ON CYPRUS EXCEPT
THAT MAKARIOS WAS KNOWN TO BE WILLING TO SATISFY TURKEY ON PRACTIC-
ALLY ALL THE MATTERS IT CONSIDERED REALLY IMPORTANT. THUS, A FOR-
MAL CYPRUS SETTLEMENT COULD BE ARRANGED JUST AS SOON AS THERE WAS--
IF THERE WAS--THE RIGHT KIND OF GOVERNMENT IN TURKEY.

6. EUROPE AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO OCCASIONAL QUES-
TIONING FROM ME, CARAMANLIS WENT ON TO GIVE HIS VIEWS OF THE SITUA-
TION IN WESTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN
IN PUBLIC LIFE FOR 42 YEARS AND HE HAD SEEN MANY GREAT PROBLEMS
COME AND GO ON THE EUROPEAN SCENE. HE FELT THERE WERE SERIOUS
PROBLEMS FOR BOTH THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES AND THE SOVIET UNION AT
THE PRESENT TIME, BUT SAID THE PROBLEMS IN THE WEST WERE
GREATER AND MORE SERIOUS. HE FELT THAT DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTIONS WERE UNDERGOING A SEVERE TESTING IN WESTERN EUROPE.
ONLY IN THE U.S. DID HE FEEL THAT DEMOCRACY WAS PERHAPS GROWING
STRONGER. THE FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESSES IN BRITAIN WERE PAINFULLY
EVIDENT TO ALL HER FRIENDS, AND THE OUTLOOK FOR FRANCE AND ITALY
WAS VERY WORRISOME--NOT TO MENTION SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND SOME OTHER
COUNTRIES. EVEN GERMANY WAS BECOMING SOMETHING OF A QUESTION MARK.
HE FELT THERE WAS A CERTAIN DECADENCE PERVADING IMPORTANT SECTORS
OF WESTERN EUROPEAN SOCIETY AND IT HAD BECOME TOO COMMONPLACE FOR
INDIVIDUALS TO SEEK EASY, IRRESPONSIBLE EXISTENCE. IN HIS VIEW,
THE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES NEEDED TO SENSE MORE ACUTELY
THE PERILS THAT THREATENED THEM AND ACCEPT THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY
OF GREATER COHESIVENESS, INTERNAL STRENGTH AND, ULTIMATELY, UNI-
FICATION. SUCH A UNIFIED EUROPE SHOULD, IN HIS VIEW, BE INEXTRICABLY
INTERLOCKED WITH THE U.S., AND THE FUTURE OF THE WEST WOULD THEN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 06217 02 OF 03 061738Z

BE ASSURED FOR MANY YEARS TO COME. ON THE SOVIET SIDE, CARAMANLIS
SAID HE BELIEVED THEY HAD THEIR PROBLEMS TOO AND THERE WAS NO
DOUBT IN HIS MIND THAT SOVIET LEADERSHIP WOULD HAVE TO GRANT
GREATER FREEDOMS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IN
RESPONSE TO INEVITABLE AND INCREASING PRESSURES FROM THE YOUNGER
GENERATION IN THE USSR. HOWEVER, SOVIET PROBLEMS WERE FAR MORE
MANAGEABLE BY THEIR AUTHORITIES THAN WESTERN EUROPEAN PROBLEMS WERE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

BY THEIRS. BUT, IF PROGRESS WERE MADE ON BOTH SIDES IN DEALING WITH THESE PROBLEMS, THE DANGER OF WAR WOULD BE REDUCED. IF NOT, HE DREADED TO CONTEMPLATE WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.

7. THE BALKANS. CARAMANLIS SAID THE SITUATION IN THE BALKANS WAS, FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW, QUITE ACCEPTABLE. GREECE AND TURKEY WERE ALLIED WITH THE WEST AND BULGARIA WITH THE WARSAW PACT. THE OTHER BALKAN COUNTRIES WERE, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IN BETWEEN. HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE STATUS QUO MAINTAINED AS THE BEST ARRANGEMENT FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE AND THAT WAS WHAT LAY BEHIND HIS OWN GOVERNMENT'S "OPENING TO THE BALKANS"--TO REINFORCE AND HELP CEMENT THE PRESENT STABILITY THERE. HE SAID THAT TITO HAD TOLD HIM THAT YUGOSLAVIA'S INDEPENDENCE COULD AND WOULD BE MAINTAINED EVEN AFTER TITO'S PASSING, BUT CARAMANLIS WAS NOT TOO SURE THAT TITO WAS RIGHT. CARAMANLIS FEARED THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT USE BULGARIA AS A SURROGATE TO PROMOTE A YUGOSLAV-BULGARIAN CONFRONTATION OR, PERHAPS, MIGHT FUEL THE EVER PRESENT CENTRIFUGAL TENDENCIES AMONG THE VARIOUS GROUPS AND NATIONALITIES IN YUGOSLAVIA. CARAMANLIS THOUGHT THE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE U.S. MUST BE EVER WATCHFUL AND PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION TO ASSURE YUGOSLAVIA'S CONTINUED INDEPENDENCE.

8. GREECE-INTERNAL. CARAMANLIS SAID HE HOPED THAT BEFORE HE LEFT OFFICE HE WOULD BE ABLE TO SEE GREECE SAFELY AND LASTINGLY ROOTED INTO A PROGRESSIVE INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. IN HIS VIEW, THIS REQUIRED, ABOVE ALL ELSE, TWO THINGS: A NEW SET OF UNDERSTAND-
INGS AND AGREEMENTS WITH TURKEY AND GREECE'S FULL ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. IF THESE TWO THINGS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED THEN HE COULD TURN HIS FULL ATTENTION TO WHAT HE CONSIDERED THE PRINCI-
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PAGE 04 ATHENS 06217 02 OF 03 061738Z

PAL CAUSES OF GREECE'S INTERNAL FRAGILITY AS A DEMOCRACY:

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 06217 03 OF 03 061753Z
ACTION SS-25

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 ATHENS 6217

EXDIS

IRRESPONSIBLE, DEMAGOGIC, AND INCOMPETENT LEADERSHIP OF GREECE'S POLITICAL PARTIES, OF THE GREEK PRESS, AND IN THE LABOR SECTOR. HE WAS NOT VERY MUCH WORRIED ABOUT THE ECONOMY OR THE YOUTH GENERATION AND THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY. HE THOUGHT THAT THE UPHEAVALS CAUSED BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES OF TEN YEARS AGO AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES OF FIVE YEARS AGO HAD HAD THEIR COUNTER-PART IN GREECE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, SINCE THE FALL OF THE DICTATORSHIP, AND THAT THESE KINDS OF PRESSURES HAD ALREADY LARGELY SUBSIDED AS THE YOUTH OF GREECE RETURNED TO MORE NORMAL AND SERIOUS PURSUITS. CARAMANLIS GAVE NO HINT OF WHETHER OR NOT HE WOULD SEEK THE PRESIDENCY OF GREECE NEXT YEAR BUT INDICATED THAT HE FELT HE STILL HAD A GREAT DEAL OF WORK TO DO IN THIS COUNTRY AND HAD NO INTENTION OF LEAVING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IN
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CONFIDENTIAL

THE NEAR FUTURE.

9. BASE NEGOTIATIONS. AS WE WERE WINDING UP OUR DISCUSSION I TOLD CARAMANLIS THAT ALTHOUGH WE HAD NOT COME AS FAR OR AS FAST IN BUILDING THE UPDATED STRUCTURE OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES AS I WOULD HAVE LIKED DURING MY THREE YEARS AS AMBASSADOR HERE, I FELT WE HAD MADE VERY SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS AND WERE WELL ALONG ON THE RIGHT PATH. THERE WERE TWO SPECIFIC THINGS, HOWEVER, THAT I HAD DEFINITELY WANTED TO SEE FINISHED BE-FORE I LEFT GREECE THAT WERE STILL--IN VARYING DEGREES--OPEN. ONE WAS THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND I TOLD HIM WE HAD MOUNTED A STRENU-OUS EFFORT TO FINISH THESE BEFORE MY OWN DEPARTURE AT THE END OF NEXT WEEK BUT THIS REQUIRED FULLEST POSSIBLE RESPONSIVENESS AND COOPERATION FROM THE GREEK SIDE. CARAMANLIS REMINDED ME THAT WE HAD BEEN WORKING ON THESE NEGOTIATIONS--AT HIS INITIATIVE--FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS. "WE WILL FINISH THEM VERY SOON--THAT IS CERTAIN,"

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

HE SAID. WHETHER THEY WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE ENDO OF NEXT WEEK OR NOT HE WAS NOT SURE--THAT WOULD DEPEND UPON THE NEGOTIATING AND LEGAL EXPERTS BECAUSE HE WANTED THE AGREEMENTS TO BE THOROUGH AND SOUND. HOWEVER, HE HAD NO DOUBT THAT THEY WOULD BE FINISHED IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND INITIALLED, AS WE HAD EARLIER AGREED. I ASKED HIM FOR HIS WORD ON THIS AND HE GAVE IT.

10. WELCH ASSASSINATION. THE OTHER THING I HAD IN MIND, I TOLD HIM, WAS THAT DICK WELCH'S MURDERERS HAD STILL NOT BEEN ARRESTED AND PUT BEHIND BARS. I SAID THAT MY GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO CONSIDER IT OF HIGH IMPORTANCE THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE BE FOUND AND PUNISHED AND I HOPED THAT HE AND THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT RELAX THEIR EFFORTS. CARAMANLIS SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED THAT A SPECIAL TEAM BE SET UP TO CONTINUE UNCEASINGLY WITH INVESTIGATION OF BOTH WELCH'S AND MALLIOS' MURDERS AND HE SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD NEVER STOP UNTIL THE GUILTY PARTIES WERE FOUND AND PUNISHED. HE ASKED THAT I LEAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 06217 03 OF 03 061753Z

TRUSTED AND RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS IN MY EMBASSY CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE CLOSEST CONTACT WITH GREEK AUTHORITIES ON THIS INVESTIGATION AND I SAID THAT I WOULD DO SO.

11. IN OUR FINAL PARTING COMMENTS HE THANKED ME ONCE AGAIN FOR MY FRIENDSHIP AND SERVICE, AND I ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION ON BEHALF OF MY FAMILY AND MYSELF FOR ALL THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT HAD DONE FOR US.

12. COMMENT. WHILE THERE IS NOTHING ESPECIALLY NEW OR REMARKABLE IN WHAT CARAMANLIS SAID IN THIS MEETING, I REPORT IT FAIRLY FULLY AS ANOTHER INSIGHT INTO HIS GENERAL VIEWS ON MATTERS OF CONCERN TO US--VIEWS THAT FORM THE BASIC FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH HE MAKES POLICY DECISIONS. THESE VIEWS OF HIS ARE WELL FORMED AND DEEPLY HELD. THEY HAVE NOT CHANGED MUCH OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

13. AS FOR THE MAN, HE REMAINS VERY MUCH IN CONTROL OF HIMSELF, HIS GOVERNMENT AND, TO A LARGE EXTENT, OF GREECE. FOR A MAN OF SEVENTY, HE IS QUITE FIT PHYSICALLY AND ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE ALWAYS, CALM AND LUCID. BARRING SOME UNFORESEEN ACCIDENT, ILLNESS OR OTHER UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT IN GREECE, I WOULD EXPECT THIS GIFTED AND IMPRESSIVE LEADER TO BE AROUND A LONG TIME.
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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

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EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
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